

Wisconsin Fur Buyers Report

2003-04

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Abstract

The average price paid for furbearer pelts rose for 11 of the 13 species on the 2003-04 fur buyer survey. The total pelt value for 2003-04 was estimated at 2.2 million dollars, an increase of \$644,000 over the 2002-03 value. Over 275,000 furs were purchased from Wisconsin fur harvesters this season. Forty-six percent of all furs purchased were from out of state.

Methods

In order to document harvest totals, interstate fur sales, and total pelt value of the 2003-04 furbearer harvest season, survey forms were mailed to all licensed Wisconsin fur buyers. Fur buyers were asked to report the number of furs purchased from Wisconsin hunters, trappers, other fur dealers, and the number purchased from outside the state. Fur buyers were also questioned on the average prices paid to Wisconsin fur harvesters for furbearer pelts. Lastly, fur buyers were asked to estimate the percentage of furs purchased from Wisconsin fur hunters. A second and third mailing were sent to all non-respondents. Data from all returned questionnaires were entered into the DNR UNIX computer and summarized using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS).

Results

Responses were received from 74 of the 77 (96%) licensed fur buyers that were surveyed. Since some of the returned surveys covered more than one buyer the corrected response rate was 100% (77 of 77). Fifty-two percent of the respondents purchased furs during the 2003-04 season.

Of the 639,708 furs purchased by licensed Wisconsin fur buyers during the 2003-04 season, 43% were purchased from Wisconsin fur harvesters, 11% were purchased from Wisconsin dealers, and 46% were purchased from outside Wisconsin (Table 1).

The 275,015 furs purchased from licensed Wisconsin hunters and trappers yielded a total pelt value of \$2,224,078. This season's total pelt value was higher than the 2002-03 season total of \$1,579,435. This is the first of the last three years in which the number of furs purchased from hunter/trappers and the total pelt value has increased.

The mean price paid to Wisconsin hunters/trappers in 2003-04 increased for 11 of the 13 species surveyed. The lowest price paid for a furbearer pelt in the 2003-04 season was \$0.75 (muskrat). The highest price paid for a furbearer pelt in the 2003-04 season was \$125.00 (bobcat). The mean percentage of coyote, gray fox, raccoon, and red fox pelts purchase that were taken via hunting during the 2003-04 season is 74%, 33%, 60%, and 50%, respectively.

Table 1. *Fur harvest data as reported by licensed Wisconsin fur buyers, 2003-04 trapping season.*

Species	# Purchased from Wisconsin Fur Harvesters	Average Price (\$)	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	# Purchased from Wisconsin Dealers	# Purchased from Outside Wisconsin	Total Pelt Value (\$)
Muskrat	139,539	\$2.65	\$0.75	\$3.03	17,269	66,077	\$369,778.35
Raccoon	88,205	\$11.68	\$7.00	\$17.00	25,810	146,866	\$1,030,234.40
Mink	10,821	\$18.84	\$4.00	\$20.79	3,224	23,972	\$203,867.64
Red Fox	2,387	\$21.40	\$2.33	\$30.00	720	10,232	\$51,081.80
Beaver	21,917	\$14.86	\$4.00	\$26.00	11,328	18,530	\$325,686.62
Gray Fox	632	\$15.42	\$5.00	\$25.00	84	2,264	\$9,745.44
Otter	1,337	\$89.49	\$11.05	\$110.00	230	1,082	\$119,648.13
Coyote	4,655	\$17.38	\$2.00	\$27.00	1,405	17,496	\$80,903.90
Bobcat	54	\$67.23	\$20.00	\$125.00	22	1,084	\$3,630.42
Fisher	625	\$28.25	\$21.05	\$30.33	8,507	1,291	\$17,656.25
Opossum	2,888	\$1.51	\$0.90	\$4.00	122	4,535	\$4,360.88
Skunk	826	\$6.19	\$2.00	\$11.00	9	2,291	\$5,112.94
Weasel	1,129	\$2.10	\$1.74	\$4.00	50	193	\$2,370.90
Total	275,015				68,780	295,913	\$2,224,077.67

**Report of Furs Purchased
2003-2004**

Form 2300-173 (R 5/04)

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Species	Furs Purchased From WISCONSIN HUNTERS AND TRAPPERS	Average Price Per Pelt \$ \$. ¢ ¢	Furs Purchased From WISCONSIN FUR DEALERS	Furs Purchased From OUTSIDE OF WISCONSIN	Percent of Furs Purchased From Wisconsin Fur Hunters (<i>Best Estimate</i>)
Muskrat	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Raccoon	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	% of raccoons hunted <input type="text"/>
Mink	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Red Fox	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	% of red fox hunted <input type="text"/>
Beaver	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Gray Fox	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	% of gray fox hunted <input type="text"/>
Otter	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Coyote	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	% of coyote hunted <input type="text"/>
Bobcat	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Fisher	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Opossum	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Skunk	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Weasel	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

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Figure 1. *The 2003-04 furbuyer questionnaire.*